

# Oak Middle School Happenings

SHREWSBURY



## “Respect is Our Cornerstone”

February 2005

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### Principals’ Corner

Oh what a game! Thanks to all who were able to attend the Sherwood vs. Oak Middle School Tsunami Benefit Volleyball Game earlier this month. Half of the seventeen hundred dollars raised that evening has been added to both schools’ fundraising efforts. Our multiple fundraising efforts will conclude on March 4<sup>th</sup> with the approximately six thousand dollars raised donated to people in need in the disaster areas. Our hope was that we both entertained at the game and modeled a sense of global community reinforced by your presence. Special

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### PTO President’s Corner

A couple of PTO Middle School major fundraisers are now upon us. The Magazine Drive and the Sing Out will involve all of us while raising funds to ENHANCE the materials and programs that are available to our students.

The Magazine Committee has been preparing for the upcoming Magazine Fundraiser, and this year we hope to have the best results ever. Kathy Hale and Joanne Hubbard are again organizing this fundraiser for both Oak and Sherwood, and need additional volunteers to help. If you have a

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***(Principals' Corner, continued from page 1)***

thanks to PTO President Mike Brand whose "very official" officiating brought an air of legitimacy to the athletic endeavors on the court.

An expanded MCAS testing schedule will engage students in a variety of assessments in **March, April and May** of this year. In **March**, English Second Language students will be assessed and all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will participate in a statewide 60 minute "Reading Question Tryout" experience at Oak on Tuesday, March 29<sup>th</sup> as a part of the state's efforts to establish a standardized norm reinforced base for future assessments. Individual 8<sup>th</sup> grade student reading results will not be available. In **April** all seventh grade students from across the state will participate in the English Language Arts Composition Assessment on Wednesday the 6<sup>th</sup> and all English Second Language assessments are completed by the 8<sup>th</sup>. In **May** all 7<sup>th</sup> grade students statewide who missed the April administration of the Composition Assessment will be provided a make-up opportunity on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Grade 8 students will participate in two assessments: Science and Technology/Engineering (5/16-17) and Math (5/23-24-25). Similar to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Reading, grade 7 students will participate in Math "Try Out Questions" on 5/16, and History/Social Science "Try Out Questions" on 5/17. Grade 7 students will complete their required English Language Arts test on 5/24 & 25. May 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> will be used as MCAS make-up days. We will do all that we can to enable your children to be prepared and at their best on these assessment days. We welcome your partnership in that pursuit.

As we approach the last four months of the school year we are reminded that they can be fleeting ones. Upon our return from the February break, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and families will be engaged in 9<sup>th</sup> grade course selection as well as final consideration for Assabet Valley Vocational School enrollment. Shrewsbury High School will host a "Curriculum Night" for parents this Thursday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 p.m. A parent "Orientation to Grade 8" program has been tentatively scheduled for current grade 7

parents for Thursday evening, March 31<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Oak Middle School Auditorium. Our challenge together will be to maintain a current focus on making every learning day that remains in this school year count as we begin to look to the school year ahead. Special recognition is due to current Grade 8 Counselor Sue DiLeo for skillfully guiding this important work along.

In this "moving in" year, no "Principals' Corner" piece would be complete without some mention of facilities. Our Auditorium, which became available to us in early February, played host to seven day and evening programs by day's end Friday, February 18<sup>th</sup>. Four evening concerts featuring the talents of our band, orchestra and chorus filled this welcome additional space with the sounds of music! Black History Month was observed with a moving grade 8 student led tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King and we concluded the week before the break with two Friday Grade Level Community Meetings. We thought it was important to recognize the students' partnership in our "moving in" experience this year as well as their numerous academic, musical, artistic, athletic and community service accomplishments to date. Each student will be provided a coupon good for one slice of pizza in our Cafeteria and a small commemorative lapel pin, provided from our Student Activity Account, as a way of showing our appreciation for their positive contributions in meeting the "challenge" that has been this school year.

Again, we would like to express our continuing appreciation to you individually, and collectively to the Middle School PTO for the support you lend us each day.

***Steve Lobban***

***Pam Farrill***

***Beth Schaper***

***(PTO President's Corner, continued from page 1)***

couple of hours, a day, or more, to spare, your assistance would be greatly appreciated. If you are not able to volunteer, then we simply ask that you considered renewing a current magazine

subscription or starting a new one, and ask family and friends to support this fundraiser and our Middle Schools. Details will be coming home soon.

Rehearsals and set design are about to begin for the “Sing Out.” What is the Sing Out? It is a PTO sponsored and organized musical featuring our 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. Linda Gadilauskas, our PTO Social Chair for Sherwood, has been working tirelessly to put the script together, hold auditions, and set the wheels in motion for this first-year event. Over 150 students arrived at the auditions trying out for specific parts, willing to help with set design, and assisting as stage crew members. There is still a need for parents to volunteer and bring their special costume, set-design, and “artistic” talents to this production. If you are interested in getting involved with Sing Out, Linda would love to hear from you.

Finally, the PTO Board will start to plan the PTO calendar, events, activities and money distribution for next year. We want to hear from individuals who would like to get involved with the PTO. If you are interested, please let a member of the PTO Executive Board know, or contact me directly at 508-842-5667, or [academic@townisp.com](mailto:academic@townisp.com).

The PTO Board would like to thank all the parents, teachers, students and administrators who have made this a successful year. With our combined efforts, we have made an enormous difference in our schools.

***Michael Brand***  
***PTO President***

### **PTO News**

#### **Magazine Drive**

For the last fifteen years, Shrewsbury Middle School has held a very successful Magazine Drive fundraiser. It is the largest fundraiser of the year and we need you! It’s easy and it’s fun.

The Magazine Drive runs from Monday, March 14th through Monday, March 21st. We would appreciate any amount of time you could give to this program.

There is a volunteer sign up sheet that went home in the Monday Folder on February 14<sup>th</sup>. If you are able to volunteer, please fill out the form and it return back to school as soon as possible. If you have any questions or did not get the volunteer sheet and would like to help, please call the Co-chair, Kathy Hale at 842-4632.

### **School Council News**

The School Council met last on February 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Oak Middle School. Results of the meeting included review of accomplishments and initial recommendations related to the School Improvement Plans “Respectful Community” goal. Accomplishments to date included review of the initial goals developed by the Committee of OMS teachers, staff and administration working on exploring mentoring programs:

- Students will develop a trusting relationship with at least one adult in the school community.
- Students will feel that their environment is emotionally and physically safe.
- Students will be provided an opportunity to create “shining moments” that publicly display their unique talents or interests.

The Council recommended that this work focus on multiple “pathways” that are specific and concrete in achieving these goals.

The Council also recommended expanded use of the Oak Web Site as a source of general information including a “New Families Page” and acknowledged expanded student leadership opportunities available this year through the “Journal” newspaper and trained peer helpers.

In other business parent Diane Doerfler agreed to continue as co-chair for the balance of the 2004-05 school year.

The Council next meets this Wednesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in the Oak Media Center. The focus for the evening's meeting will be on the year's final School Improvement Plan goal: *Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment*.

### **Nurse's Notes- February 2005**

There have been several cases of Mononucleosis (Mono) at school recently. Mono is caused by the Epstein-Barr Virus (EBV) and most people become infected with EBV sometime during their lives. In the U.S., as many as 95% of adults between age 35-40 have been infected. Many children become infected with EBV and either have no symptoms or mild, flu like illness. When EBV infection occurs during adolescence or young adulthood, it causes Mono 35-50% of the time.

Symptoms of Mono are fever, sore throat, fatigue and swollen lymph nodes. Sometimes the spleen or liver becomes swollen. Heart and central nervous system problems occur very rarely, and Mono is almost never fatal. Symptoms may take 1-2 months to resolve, but EBV remains dormant in a few cells in the throat and blood for the rest of the person's life.

Transmission of EBV requires intimate contact with the saliva of an infected person. Transmission through air or blood does not normally occur. The time from infection to appearance of symptoms is usually 4-6 weeks. Infected persons can spread the virus to others for a period of weeks. No special precaution or isolation is required since the virus is also found in the saliva of healthy people and these people can spread the virus intermittently throughout life. For this reason, transmission of EBV is almost impossible to prevent.

Diagnosis of Mono is based on symptoms and laboratory tests including elevated white blood cell count, increased percentage of certain atypical white blood cells, and a positive reaction to a "Mono spot" test.

There is no specific treatment for Mono other than treating the symptoms. No antiviral drugs

or vaccines are available. Some physicians will prescribe a 5-day course of steroids to control throat and tonsillar swelling. Children with enlarged liver or spleen should not be allowed to participate in PE class or sports until swelling has resolved.

Information taken from [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

***Lee-Anne Saccone, MSN, RN***  
***(508) 841-1204***

### **The Home-School Connection**



### **Attend a Parent Workshop Sponsored by Your PTO!**

Dear Parents of Shrewsbury Students,  
You are invited to attend the "***re-scheduled***" workshop in the Pre K – 12 PTO sponsored parent workshop series. Please note the ***new date***.

**What: Helping my Child Become a Better Reader and Writer**



**When: Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 7 to 8:30 PM**

**Where: Paton School, Room 2, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor**

**Presenters:** Linda Lepiesza-1<sup>st</sup> grade classroom teacher, Paton School, Kathy Soderstrom-4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom teacher, Paton School

The goal of this workshop is to share some tools and resources that will help you enhance your child's literacy skills.

### **This workshop will:**

- Discuss ways to create a home environment that encourages literacy development.

- Offer ideas to encourage oral language, reading, and writing at home.
- Demonstrate strategies for understanding reading.
- Demonstrate strategies for improving writing.

If possible, please RSVP at 508-841-8300 ext. 4220 or email me at [lbuxamusa@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us](mailto:lbuxamusa@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us). When leaving a message, please include your name and phone number. If you cannot send an RSVP, please do not hesitate to still attend. We would love to see you!

**IMPORTANT:** If Shrewsbury Public Schools are closed that day due to inclement weather conditions, the workshop will be cancelled. Cancellations will be posted on the local educational cable channel (SETV-34).

### The Home-School Connection-Part 2



### **Attend a Parent Workshop Sponsored by Your PTO!**

Dear Parents of Shrewsbury Students,

You are invited to attend the next free workshop in the Pre K–12 PTO sponsored parent workshop series.

### **What: Understanding Depression and Anxiety in Children and Adolescents**



**When: Tuesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, 7 to 8:30 PM**

**Where: High School, Presentation Room**

**Presenters:** Christine Biron, MA, L.M.H.C. Clinical director at Shrewsbury Youth and

Family Services, Kristen Minio, MA, L.M.H.C. Adjustment counselor at Oak Middle School

This workshop will present a framework for understanding the signs and symptoms of child and adolescent depression and anxiety. Various treatment modalities and intervention strategies will be explored. The focus of this presentation will be to equip parents and educators with resources for addressing this clinical issue effectively.

If possible, please RSVP at 508-841-8300 ext. 4220 or email me at [lbuxamusa@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us](mailto:lbuxamusa@shrewsbury.k12.ma.us). When leaving a message, please include your name and phone number. If you cannot send an RSVP, please do not hesitate to still attend. We would love to see you!

**IMPORTANT:** If Shrewsbury Public Schools are closed that day due to inclement weather conditions, the workshop will be cancelled. Cancellations will be posted on the local educational cable channel (SETV-34).

*Loubaina Buxamusa*

### “Students Shine”

Congratulations Oak Middle School Mathcounts Team 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Regional Winners

Ajay Dhesikan	Ruby Lee
Derek Huang	Saketh Kalathur

**They will compete in the State Competition on March 5<sup>th</sup>!**

### **Other regional team competitors:**

Alex Tang (first alternate for state team)  
Raca Banerjee  
Shirley Doan  
Chiyu Ren

*Think Spring!!*